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S. O. Box  
of Exposir

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rec'd 7-29

25 July 88

Dear Mr. Jettenboult,

Since I am scheduled to present a discussion of the 1811 Pesthouse Half Cent at the Pennsylvania Association of Numismatists in Scranton, Pa. on August 13 I am writing to you regarding your specimen. I shall be most appreciative of receiving a photo, my description that you might give, any other information that you care to share with me. If possible I shall be quite pleased to compare our specimens.

If you want to receive a copy of the comments at the PANA PAN convention just add a SASE to enclose for your convenience.

Cordially,

Ernest J. Montgomery

Carbon spots

OBV 2<sup>nd</sup> st. 1 and 13<sup>th</sup> star

REV: (small) to R. of

2<sup>nd</sup> outside very R. Weight Don't know

Intermittent rim "crumpling" cleaned? Not obvious - P/L red  
(or folded-over wire edge)

From VN thru TAT. End of over America? 7-8 dents  
not fully separated

Wire edge over  
9-40-2

... Well...

From R of F to over A  
rest two of which ("") joined

R. TETTENHORST  
P. O. Box 14020  
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

Aug 14, 1988

Dr. Montgomery,

I hope your discussion at PAN about the Mickley strike went well. I would be interested in receiving a copy. The variation in weights is of particular interest. One would assume, given the small number struck, that they were struck at the same time and on planchets from a single source.

Have had a chance to look at mine, and have this information for you:

Weight: Don't know yet. Will weigh it at some future date and let you know.

Color: Breen says, "These are found on bright red copper planchets..." and that description fits mine exactly. No signs of cleaning are apparent to me. If you are going to the EAC meeting next April, let me know. I will bring my coin and you can see for yourself.

Cud over America: There is clearly deterioration in the denticles, but I would describe it as crumbling, rather than as a cud. There are 7 or 8 denticles, from right of F to over A, between which the separations are only about half the normal length.

Obverse: The final two, over A, are the least separated. The picture in Cohen's book shows this. Comparing my coin with the Breen

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24 August 88

Dear Mr. Letterhout,

Enclosed is a copy of the information that was used along with slides at an ESC meeting during the PAN Convention of August 13. Since then, in addition to your description I have also received another from the owner of the 1985 ANA auction specimen. I have also received response from another suspected requester a copy of the info, but he neither confirmed nor denied owning one. Thus the Charter membership of the 1811 Restrike Half Cents is at 4. After sending the info as promised I plan to appeal again to those not responding previously and then circulating the compilation.

Cordially,

EJM

THE 1811 RESTRIKE HALF CENT

I. Introduction

E. Montgomery  
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It is widely accepted that a Restrike is a coin struck from authentic dies but produced in a year different from the year of regular issue. If it is, in addition, a combination of dies that were not used together for any regular issue then it is also a Mule. By using these definitions the 1811 Half Cent under consideration today is both a Restrike and a Mule. However, although to refer to it as an 1811 Restrike Mule Half Cent is accurate and precise I prefer to continue the traditional appellation of the 1811 Restrike Half Cent. 15065

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### II. History

It has been promulgated that among other dies acquired by Joseph J. Mickley after the Mint fire of 1815 were an Obverse die originally used in 1811 for the striking of United States Half Cents and also a Reverse die used in 1802 for the striking of United States Half Cents. The 1811 Restrike Half Cent is a combination of these two dies.

<sup>MICKLEY</sup>  
It is Mickley who has been given credit for being the first in 1863 to offer a specimen for sale consisting of a Half Cent with an 1811 Obverse and an 1802 Reverse. Also, one appeared as lot #76 in the W. Eliot Woodward sale of October 18, 1864. Whether these represent the same or different specimens is not known. More recently, Breen gives the distinction of the initial offering as being lot #493 of Edward Cogan's auction of December 19, 1859.

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#### III. Definition

As described in 1916 by Gilbert there are two varieties of the regular issue of the 1811 United States Half Cents consisting of two Obverse dies, commonly referred to as the wide date and the close date. These are each combined with a common Reverse die. The close date Obverse die subsequently used for the striking of the 1811 Restrike Half Cent was initially used to strike the Gilbert Variety 1. The Empire Guide lists the 1811 Half Cent with this Obverse die as E-63. (The Empire Guide is the only source that includes the 1811 Restrike Half Cent in an attribution of the United States Half Cent series assigning it as E-65.) Neither Gilbert nor the Empire Guide give any reasons for the order of their variety listings. However, Cohen and Breen do explain that their listings are on the basis of emission sequence. Cohen and Breen each list the close date Obverse as being the same die used for the Obverse of the regular issue of the 1811 Half Cents which they attribute as Variety 2. None of the four attributors mention any developing characteristics of this die relative to the die's usage.

Since the total census of the 1811 regular issue Half Cents is 63,140 and all were delivered to the Mint on July 11 then the only evidence of the relative usage of the wide and close date Obverse dies is the Rarity ratings that have evolved, i.e. R<sub>4</sub> for the wide date Cohen and Breen Variety 1 and R<sub>3</sub> for the close date Cohen and Breen Variety 2.

In reviewing the regular issue of 1802 Half Cents it is seen that there are two varieties consisting of a single Obverse die combined with separate old style and new style Reverse dies as first described by Gilbert. The old style Reverse is found on Gilbert's Variety 2 and is an R<sub>6</sub>. The new style

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Reverse die of the 1802 Half Cent initially used on Gilbert's Variety 1 is the same Reverse die used on the 1811 Restrike Half Cent. In this case the Empire Guide attributes it as E-27. Cohen and Breen refer to the new style 1802 Reverse die as Reverse B. It is to be remembered that this is the only Reverse die in the entire United States Half Cent series to have a berry between the right stem and the lower outside leaf.

Gilbert pointed out that, at times, slight die breaks from the ends of the stems could be seen to extend toward the U in UNITED and the final A in AMERICA. The Empire Guide relates that a progressively weaker HALF CENT develops with the use of the die. Cohen, in his first edition of American Half Cents the "Little Half Sisters", states that it is his opinion that the die breaks as reported by Gilbert are defects in the die preparation rather than true die breaks. In addition, in the second edition of his book he relates that a number of small line breaks develop between some of the letters of the legend when the die is in a rusted state and he further states that a specimen has been reported as having a rim break over RICA of AMERICA. Completing the reports of the four attributors relative to Reverse die changes, Breen describes the appearance of rust spots around the legend and fraction with subsequent appearance of a crack from the rim to the first T in STATES. These developments resulting from the use of the new style Reverse die of 1802 will be seen later under the Description of the Exhibited Coin.

The total census of 1802 Half Cents of regular issue is 14,366 with the second of two deliveries to the Mint being 6,166 pieces on September 14. This second delivery is presumed to be the coins having been produced with the new style Reverse die that was subsequently used on the 1811 Restrike Half Cent and the 1812 Restrike.

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and this suggests that this was the extent of use of the die during 1802.. If the 6,166 figure is to represent the number of pieces of the Variety 2 then this leaves 8,200 out of the total for pieces of Variety 1. However, the relative ratings of  $R_6$  for the old style Reverse Variety 1 and  $R_4$  for the new style Variety 2 of the regular issues indicate otherwise.

IV. Enumeration

The first notation of the number of specimens of the 1811 Restrike Half Cent was by John Haseltine in his cataloguing of the 1880's. There he stated that there were (6) struck for Mickley. Interestingly, I found no given basis for this figure. Also, I did not find anywhere that Mickley himself said how, when, where, or how many specimens were struck and why Haseltine arrived at six is a matter for conjecture. Nevertheless, it has been repeated over and over by such as Bowers, Breen, Cohen, Ingalls, Paramount, Parke-Bernet, Scott, Spadone, Stack's, and Taxay.

The referral to specific coins appears to have begun with Stack's auction of the Dupont collection in 1954. Interestingly, the Dupont catalogue refers to the Brobst specimen subsequently sold in 1963, the Showers specimen subsequently sold in 1969, and the ~~Miles~~<sup>Mile</sup> specimen subsequently also sold in 1969. All of these were negotiated by Stack's. Almost without exception, since the Dupont sale subsequent references have been made to those of the 1) Brobst, 2) Showers, 3) Dupont, and 4) Miles collections. A few of those referring to these specimens are: The Scott Catalogue and Encyclopedia US Coins, Collecting Rare Coins for Profit by Q. David Bowers, the Breen encyclopedias, the Brobst sale, the Hathaway and Bowers FPL's of 1969-1971, and the Spence sale by Stack's in 1975.

Whereas, in his Encyclopedia of US and Proof Coins 1722-1977 published in 1977 Breen lists (5) specimens, in his publication of Walter Breen's Encyclopedia of United States Half Cents 1793-1857 in 1983 he gives a Pedigree listing of (10) 1811 Restrike Half Cents. The specimen shown today is included in the listing and since I have personally traced it back to the R.L. Miles, Jr. col-

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lection I have no doubts that its additional pedigree listing by Breen is accurate. However, in ~~only~~ one instance, viz. the specimen currently in the Connecticut State Library collection, does he trace the Pedigree before the beginning of the Twentieth century. This causes me to wonder how many early pieces have not been included.

The specimen in Breen's listing referred to as "Thomas Elder (circa 1941); Mrs. R. Henry Norweb collection" has not appeared in the sales pertaining to the Norweb collection. All other specimens in this listing have been traced to their current owners and except for the George J. Bauer specimen, which has remained in the same numismatist's collection since being acquired by private treaty, has changed owners relatively recently. Personally, I find the use of Pseudonyms by collectors puzzling unless such persons believe that the sale of an "unknown" will fetch a higher price than one of known pedigree. Perhaps, this same desire for anonymity (what is anonymity anyway?) is the reason that some of these same people are unable to interchange with other collectors about their possessions. Nevertheless, I shall withhold their names pending future endeavors to communicate with them. Unfortunately, I must confess that I have been unable to confirm the truth or denial of the locations as learned in some cases despite handwritten letters including SASE's.

Regarding certain others in the Breen Pedigree listin, it has been suggested to me that the specimen sold by William Doyle's auction of the Lauder collection on December 16, 1983 is the aforementioned Norweb specimen. Relative to the Brand specimen as sold in the Bowers and Merena Nuember 7, 1983 Part 1 sale of the Virgil M. Brand collection, it was purchased by one dealer and it has been seen for sale in the inventory of another dealer who has not responded

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to<sup>1</sup> my correspondence. This specimen is known to have been purchased by Brand in 1905 at the first of what would be many sales by Thomas Elder as reported by Q. David Bowers on p. 109 of Virgil Brand-The Man and his Era (1983).

The Heritage ANA Auction of 1985 specimen was purchased by a Michigan collector who also prefers not to respond to my postal.

Among the specimens which have appeared in sources within my own library and not seen in the Breen listing are: 1) Woodward (J.E. Cooley, lot #761, Oct. 1864), 2) Leavitt, Strebigh & Co. (Alfred S. Robinson, Oct. 22, 1867), 3) Mason & Co. (Fewsmith, lot #1087, Oct. 4, 1870), 4) Scott & Co., 1871-1874 Coin Priced catalogues, 5) Messrs. Bangs & Co. (John W. Haseltine, lot #470, Jan. 31, 1879), 6) S.H. & H. Chapman (Thomas Cleaneay, lot #1962, Dec. 9-13, 1890), 7) Lyman Low (Jas. S. Bryant, lot #91, Dec. 12, 1906), 8) Thomas Elder (George Ross, lot #1839, May 13015, 1937), and 9) the Exhibition of US and Colonial Coins Jan.-Feb. 1814 by the American Numismatic Society, "Half Cents loaned by George P. French, Rochester, N.Y.: 1811 Original, 1811 Restrike (Half Cents).

Just where these and other specimens were while attention was being given to the Brobst, Showers, Dupont, and Miles specimens is a mystery. Were they produced while the dies were owned by Mickley? Were they produced with or without Mickley's knowledge, or his direction, or his permission? One thing for certain, the dies were reacquired by the government prior to the auction of the Mickley estate by Moses Thomas & Sons in November of 1878 and then destroyed. Thus, any creations after 1878 are forgeries of restrikes.

I have been curious to note that the Reverse die is referred to in different ways in the early catalogues: Cleaneay (Rev. of 1808), Woodward (Rev. of 1807), Bryant (Rev. prior to 1809), Neil and Roach, both catalogued by Mehl (Rev. of 1807 and before), ~~and~~ the Monograph of Frossard (.....reverse belonging

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to noe of the years between 1802 and 1808), and Rice (Rev. of 1804). This is another matter for conjecture.

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### V. Description of the Exhibited Coin

There has been very little in the descriptions of the actual coins in the catalogue sales which is of help in separating one from the other. On no occasion have I found more than one specimen in the same location at the same time. Thus, a comparison of any two has not been made. Commonly, they have been described as Proof, from rusted dies, etc. The characteristics of the wear of the Reverse die as described by Gilbert, the Empire Guide, Cohen, and Breen have been ignored.

The specimen on exhibit has been described as follows: In the Allenberger collection sale of 1948 it is called "Proof, the Obverse is red and ~~blue~~ blue. The Reverse is iridescent purple." In the R.L. Miles, Jr. catalogue it is called "Proof, struck from rusty dies, iridescent, magenta, and sea green." In the Hathaway and Bowers FPL's there is no description and in the Auction 80 catalogue of Stack's sale the description of the Mile's sale is repeated.

Current examination confirms the presence of both a magenta and sea green iridescence especially when viewed in sunlight. The Obverse reveals a prominent wire rim from the 7th star around the top of Liberty to the 10th star. From here there is a much thinner wire rim to a point opposite the second 1 of the date. Relative to the denticles, from midway between the 13th star and the second 1 of the date the denticles become round and resemble a beaded border continuing as such until opposite the point of the bust. The denticles are all clear but are especially clear beneath the area of the high wire rim. The rust spots are prominent at the second star, the ninth star, and the 8 and the second 1 of the date. Other rust spots are seen in the field.

On the Reverse, the rim shows a very small cud above the space between U and N of UNITED. There is a large cud on the second A in AMERICA to the right edge of the first cypher in the date. The denticles are flattened from the first

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T in STATES to the final S in STATES. There are lines from the rim to each of the T's in STATES. There is a small line between the R and I of AMERICA at the rim. There are no lines extending from the stems toward either the U of UNITED nor the final A of AMERICA. Is the absence of such lines evidence that when present they do represent die breaks rather than defects in the preparation of the die since the latter would be present on all coins made ~~from~~ <sup>of</sup> the die?

As may be expected, there is no effort at giving the weight, diameter, circumference, or the thickness of any specimen offered for sale or auction other than the weight of three specimens in the Breen Pedigree listing.

The following measurements of the Exhibited coin were made on an Ohaus 3100 Dial-o-gram Balance and with a Craftsman 6" Dial Vernier Caliper.

The dry or air weight = 81.7 grains

Neuporf = 81.00 gr

The wet weight = 72.5 grains

Brookhaven = 81.9 gr

The weight of water displaced = 9.2 grains

Shawnee = 77.2 gr

The Specific Gravity = 8.880

The Ohaus Specific Gravity for Half Cents of 1793-1857 is 8.96. Due to a probable chemical imbalance in some alloys a plus or minus 0.5 variation is an acceptable tolerance in a final reading. For this coin the minus ).08 difference is of no significance and therefore, the Specific Gravity for this 1811 Restrike Half Cent is normal. According to Cowles Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins by Mort Reed, Copyright 1969 the weight of U.S. Half Cents (1800-1808) is 80 grains and for U.S. Half Cents (1809-1836) it is 84 grains.

The diameter of this coin = 0.917" or 2.3 cm. and the thickness = 0.065" or 0.1625 cm.

From my own collection I have compiled the following comparisons:

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1802 Half Cents

<u>Specimen #</u>	<u>Dry Weight</u>	<u>Wet Weight</u>	<u>Weight of Water Displaced</u>	<u>Specific Gravity</u>
1 (OR)	72.6 gr.	64.2 gr.	8.4 gr.	8.64
2 (NR)	79.9	70.7	9.2	8.55
3 (d)	80.5	71.4	9.1	8.85
RESTRIKE	81.7	72.5	9.2	8.80
4	73.0	64.9	8.1	9.01
5	78.8	70.1	8.7	9.05
6	83.0	73.9	9.1	9.12

\* The official weight is 80 grains for 1800-1808 Half Cents and the Specific Gravity is 8.96.

1811 Half Cents

<u>Specimen #</u>	<u>Dry Weight</u>	<u>Wet Weight</u>	<u>Weight of Water Displaced</u>	<u>Specific Gravity</u>
1	79.9 gr.	70.6 gr.	9.3 gr.	8.59
2	81.9	72.5	9.4	8.71
3	79.6	70.4	9.2	8.73
4	78.2	69.3	8.9	8.79
RESTRIKE	81.7	72.5	9.2	8.80
5	82.7	73.4	9.3	8.89
6	80.1	71.4	8.7	9.21

\* The official weight is 84 grains for 1809-1836 Half Cents and the Specific Gravity is 8.96.

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### VI. Description of Other Specimens of the 1811 Restrike Half Cents

The specimen now in a Missouri collection and which is the plate coin in both the Cohen and Breen books has a visible space between the second and third 1's of the date on the Obverse. This is not seen on the Exhibited coin. On the Reverse there is a prominence of the left rim especially from opposite the 2 of the denominator to opposite the U of UNITED and again opposite STAT of STATES. There is a small cud extending for five denticles ending at the top of the first A in AMERICA and there is a very large cud extending from opposite the final A in AMERICA to opposite the right side of the second cypher of the denominator. The small cud referred to is not present on the Exhibited specimen and the larger cud is smaller on the Exhibited coin. In addition, the cracks through the tops of RICA as seen on the Missouri coin are not seen on the Exhibited coin. These suggest that the Missouri coin is a later strike. The rust spots are identicle on the two specimens.

The Showers specimen is almost identicle to the Missouri specimen. No color comparisons can be made until the coins can be examined at the same time and this will take some doing.

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August 13, 1988  
Pennsylvania Association  
of  
Numismatists

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